

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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PIONEER EVANGELISM CHURCH GROWS

The Kotoura Church in Okayama held a dedication service on May 19 celebrating the achievement of financial independence. This was one of the first-year pioneer evangelism projects of the Council of Cooperation which was started in 1952. The church was built at a cost of one and a half million Yen on 400 tsubo of land 3 years ago. Church membership has risen to 76 with an average attendance of 49. Church School numbers 130 and a kindergarten has been organized. This is the third church to go to self-support following after Chitose Eiko church in Hokkaido and Hikari Church in Osaka. However, considering that the other two are located in more or less special places such as beside a military base in one case, and in a residential area in the other, the Kotoura Church is said to be the result of pure pioneer evangelism.

TOKYO CHURCH HAS DOUBLE CELEBRATION

The 80 year old Oimachi Church in Tokyo held a special service June 9 one day before the 80th anniversary of her founding at which she commemorated an elder's 70 years of Christian dedication. The elder, Mr. Shun Suzuki, 77, is currently President of the Japan Family Bible Association. The special service also commemorated the 10th anniversary of the Pastor, Rev. Yukawa. Mr. Suzuki was baptized in 1886 in the Nagoya Church by Dr. James Ballagh. He has been an elder of the church for 30 years. Still extending his Christian activities, Mr. Suzuki is attending the night sessions at the Tokyo Theological Seminary. His wife, Nanako is the elder sister of Dr. Yuasa of I.C.U.. As a part of the special commemoration service the church also has obtained space in the Kodaira Reien for a church cemetery. Speaking at the commemoration service were the Rev. Shokichi Hata, 86, and Mr. Takeo Yamanaga, Principal of the Ferris Seminary in Yokohama.

THREE LABOR GOSPEL SCHOOLS HELD

Emphasizing the Gospel of Love to the Laboring Masses the Industrial Evangelism Committee in the Tokyo area of the United Church of Christ is holding Labor Gospel Schools in the Ginza Church in the Tokyo area, the Kawasaki Church in the Kanagawa area and the Chiba-Torimachi Church for the Chiba area from June 10 to July 25. Under the theme "Working Place and Christian Witness" the aim of the schools is to penetrate the Christian Gospel into the laboring masses. The schools are held one night a week for a period of 6 weeks.

JAPANESE CHRISTIAN NAVAL OFFICER'S CONTACT

Recently a gift of £200 (200 pounds) (¥200,000) and a large quantity of used clothing was sent from New Zealand for unfortunate children and old people in Japan. Back of the gift is a story: Mr. Yutaka Kawashima, 34, a member of the Yumicho Church fought in the South Pacific during the war as a Japanese Naval Officer. Now he is First Officer of the Melbourne Maru of the Osaka Shosen Kaisha. When his ship touched New Zealand last year he attended church along with the Captain. They were asked to speak to the congregation and sang some Japanese hymns. Speaking of the sufferings of the Japanese at Hiroshima and Nagasaki during the war and of the present situation of the churches in Japan the people were so impressed that they collected money and used clothing to be given to Japanese people in need. One half of the ¥200,000 is to be used for the special camp for handicapped children to be conducted this summer by JCWS and the other half is to be given to children in orphanages. The used clothing has been forwarded to the Shakaikan in Yokosuka, an old people's home operated by the United Church of Christ in Japan, and the Kinugasa Hospital in Yokosuka.

FINANCING WORLD SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION

At the all-member Preparatory Committee meeting in Tokyo in early June, 37 and one half million Yen was set as Japan's share of the underwriting of the World Sunday School Convention in 1958. ¥30,000,000 it was decided, is to be raised by the supporting organization headed by Mr. Keizo Shibusawa, while the Christian Churches will be asked to raise the remaining 7 and one half million Yen in the coming year. In addition it was decided that 9 and one half million Yen of the total budget for the Convention will be appropriated for the hotel expenses for representatives from Asian countries.

DR. CHANDRAN TO LEAD STUDY ON WORSHIP

Recognizing that the worship service is of utmost concern to the Christian church the Council on Theological Education held at Bangkok in February of last year which was attended by Rev. Hidenobu Kuwada, Pres. of Tokyo Union Theological Seminary, reached an agreement that Asian nations should study the matter of the worship service in the respective countries. The National Christian Council in Japan organized a Committee immediately for this purpose headed by the Rev. Senen Kishi, Pres. of the Japan Lutheran Theological Seminary. This Committee will take advantage of the visit of Dr. J. R. Chandran, Pres. of the Bangalore Theological Seminary of South India this month by holding two conferences to discuss the matter of worship and liturgics at Tokyo and Osaka. Dr. Chandran is an Asian liaison member on the Committee on the question of worship of the World Council of Churches and he is on his way to attend the Central Executive Committee of the World Council at Yale University this summer. The Tokyo meeting will be held at Hakone in late June and the other one in Osaka in early July. Teachers from Theological Schools and Ministers of the respective areas are urged to attend.

NEW PRESIDENT OF YOKOSUKA SOCIAL CENTER

The Yokosuka Christian Social Center at Taura, adjacent to Yokosuka, observed the inauguration of its new President, the Rev. Shiro Abe on June 15. An Associate Professor at Meiji Gakuin, Rev. Abe, succeeds the Rev. E. W. Thompson, IBC Missionary, who has retired as Director of the Center.

HOKKAIDO GOVERNOR INVITES CHRISTIAN LECTURER

In Hokkaido, the far north island of Japan, where the words of the famous Dr. Clark, "Boys, be ambitious" are still heard everywhere, leaders and men of culture recently took a deep interest in the meeting in mid-June of the Educational Association of Christian School in Japan which met in Hokkaido. Governor Tanaka asked the Association to provide a Christian lecturer for the Diet's current session with the purpose of underscoring Hokkaido's relationship with Christianity. Dr. Enkichi Kan, Dean of the Literature Dep't of St. Paul's University, was elected to be the Lecturer to speak to the members of the Hokkaido Government. Still another program was arranged by the Sapporo broadcasting station, a round table conference on Christian education. Themes discussed concerned the contribution of Christian education to Japan, Christian Schools pioneering the education of women, and Hokkaido's relationship to Christianity. Participants were Dr. Hachiro Yuasa, Pres. of I.C.U., Dr. Teiji Takagi, Pres. of Tokyo Women's Christian College, Dr. Nobuto Oda, Pres. of Joshi Seigakuin, and Dr. Megumi Imada, Prof. at Kansei Gakuin.

PRISON EVANGELISM CONFERENCE IN AUGUST

Planned by the Committee on Prison Evangelism of the United Church of Christ in Japan, approximately 150 Pastors engaged in prison evangelism, most of them also church Pastors, are expected to attend. Aimed at smoothing relations among prison evangelists, officials of the Ministry of Justice have also been invited. On the agenda is a re-evaluation of the responsibilities of religious leaders to prisoners, what the prisons desire of religious leaders, hindrances to visitation of prisoners, interviewing prisoners, interviewing families of criminals, rehabilitation after sentence, home visitation, and provision of housing for released prisoners without homes. Chm. of the Committee, Rev. Ryo Takahashi, says, "there are many cases of prisoners who have finished their terms going back to the way of evil because of a lack of a job and a home." The United Church is planning to build an institution to help in their rehabilitation and to assist in finding employment for these men.

YOUTH FOR CHRIST LEADER DEPARTING

Mr. Norman J. Jameson, Executive Sec'y of Youth for Christ in Japan was scheduled to leave for Canada aboard the Hikawa Maru July 3. He first came to Japan 4 years ago to attend the Youth for Christ World Conference held in Tokyo. In 1955 he succeeded Mr. Dale Kryderman as Executive Sec'y for Youth for Christ in Japan when the latter returned home to the States. Mr. Jameson will complete a documentary film in technicolor entitled "Captives" depicting the spiritual lives of the Japanese which he has done at his own expense prior to his departure. He will make lecture tours in Canada and the U.S. with this film in an effort to arouse concern for Japan's evangelism.

FORMOSAN CHURCHMEN VIEW JAPAN'S SUNDAY SCHOOLS

6 Church School teachers from Taiwan have recently been in Japan to observe Christian Education in preparation for the coming World Convention next year. Rev. Gen, addressing the Preparatory Committee for the World Convention, said, "the object of our current visit is to see at first hand the situation of Christian Education at Church Schools in Japan. Many people are anxious to attend the World Convention next year from Formosa. Since the war Christianity finds it easy to expand in Taiwan. With over 1,000 churches and more than 100,000 believers the strength of the church there is on a steady increase. Formosa's Centennial of evangelistic activities will be marked in 1964, 7 years from now, and all the denominations are endeavoring to double the strength of the church."

REV. HIRAI OFF TO 2 WORLD CONFERENCES

At a recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the NCC Rev. Kiyoshi Hirai, Gen. Sec'y of the NCC was selected to attend the third convention of the World Lutheran Federation and its Foreign Missions Standing Board of Trustee's Meeting to be held at Minneapolis August 15-25, and also to attend the Central Committee meeting of the World Council of Churches to be held at Yale University July 30 to Aug. 8 as a Consultant. He is expected to leave Japan July 23. At the same meeting formal affiliation of the National Christian Council of Japan with the Eastern Asian Christian Council and approval of the constitution of this Council were affirmed. It will be remembered that at a joint Asian Conference of the IMC and the WCC held at Prapat, Indonesia this past March, the Asia Council on Ecumenical Missions was dissolved into a new set-up to be known as the Eastern Asia Christian Council which will be put into operation in 1958. The United Church of Christ in Japan and the Japan Episcopal Church have already decided to join this organization. The Eastern Asia Christian Council is comprised of the National Christian Councils of 14 east Asian countries.

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DELAYED PUBLICATION

The publication of the Japan Christian Year Book is being delayed until a statistical report prepared by the Kirisuto Shimbun has been completed.

CORRECTION

The "Youth in Industry Program" for this summer reported in the last issue is a program sponsored by the NCC, not by the United Church's Occupational Evangelism Committee, as was stated. Correct dates are July 19 to Aug. 18 instead of July 12 to Aug. 11, as was also stated. Finally, only Japanese are involved, the program is not international, as was reported by mistake.

METHODIST YOUTH TEAM IN JAPAN

From June 29 to Aug. 24 the United Church's Youth Commission will host a team of 8 students and their leader from the California-Arizona Conference of the Methodist Church. They are here to observe the work being done in Japan and to do a bit of sight-seeing. After a week in Tokyo for orientation and visits to universities, libraries, museums, and the Institute for Democratic Education, they will go to the Kansai area for a view of Industrial work and the cultural side of Japan that only Kyoto and Nara can provide. This will be followed by a special work camp project in Morioka at a school for hospitalized children, and with a rest stop for several days in Hokkaido.

VISITING BOARD SECRETARIES ATTEND MEETING

Taking advantage of the presence in Japan of Dr. T. T. Brumbaugh, Exec. Sec'y, Division of World Mission of the Methodist Church, Dr. John C. Smith, Associate General Sec'y of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., Council of Corporation, and Dr. Margaret Billingsley, Exec. Sec'y of the Methodist Church Women's Division of Christian Service, an informal Discussion Committee of the United Church, composed of representatives of the evangelistic, educational and social service fields, along with missionary representatives and the Moderator of the United Church, is meeting in special sessions this week. It will be recalled that this committee was appointed to consider the whole range of Christian work in Japan, in connection with foreign aid received from abroad, following upon recent discussions of the disproportionately large share of aid going to Christian Schools compared with that given to assist evangelism and social work.

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